

Press Release by Gen. MATSUI, 18 Dec. 1937

"Time will be allowed,  
Grave reflection must be called for."

General Matsui's Declaration

General MATSUI, Commander-in-Chief of all the Expeditionary Armies in China, after having performed religious service for the war dead in Nanking, issued a special statement at 4 p.m. on the 18th of December. In his statement he once more called for the grave reflection of the whole Chinese nation and plainly expressed a firm and unshakeable resolution regarding the future movements of the military authorities. The statement made at this junction when Japan has made an epochal triumphal entry into the fortress of Nanking is as follows. The army took firm possession of Nanking and performed the triumphal entry yesterday (17th December). And after having performed religious service for the war dead today, the army made every possible preparation for the future military operations without delay. The army lost no time in moving a certain part of the troops towards the Kiangpei districts, and another part toward the Chekiang and Anhui districts. Thus, the army has been engaged in a series of military operations. But taken all together, the army having become considerably exhausted, it is necessary for troops in general to take a little rest, because the army had been engaged in unrelenting landing operations for four months since its troops were landed, and immediately after that, the army turned its maneuvers to the pursuit of the enemy. During this time the army is expected to adjust their military preparedness, and to map out the next plan of operations, strengthening the defences of the field of operations, and endeavoring to pacify the inhabitants of the districts.

The future military operations depend entirely upon what attitude Chiang Kai-shek and the National Government of China will assume, and, therefore, I am not in a position to make any immediate comment on this point. On the part of the enemy, I think, the troops and inhabitants of the southern parts of the Yangtze-Kiang must have been menaced not a little by the past battles. As a matter of course, I think, the National Government of China has been given the opportunity of examining itself. I, preferably, must express my deep sympathy for the enormous loss the troops and inhabitants suffered from the war. Consequently, we must make them rely on the Japanese army and also make them entertain friendly sentiments to the Japanese military authorities by the self-examination on the part of the National Government of China. I hope, in view of the situation, the time will soon come when the National Government will be convinced of the error they have made.

On the contrary, if the National Government does not repent, the army, to my regret, must carry out the war as a result of its mission until they, the National Government, acknowledges themselves beaten.

The cold season is actually here and the closing days of the year are drawing near. At this time, the Japanese army intends to give time for the troops and inhabitants of China in order to call for their grave reflection on the one hand, and to show Japan is fighting in the cause of justice on the other. As I have performed a memorial service for the war dead today, my mind is filled with deep emotions. But I have been touched with compassion not only for the Japanese war dead, but also for the dead who were misled by the National Government

which entangled the present state of affairs in the East through having not been awakened to the contemporary circumstances. I extend much sympathy to millions of innocent people in the Kiangpei and Chekiang districts, who suffered the evils of war. Now the flag of the rising sun is floating high over Nanking, and the Imperial Way is shining in the southern parts of the Yangtze-Kiang; the dawn of the renaissance of the East is on the verge of offering itself. On this occasion, I hope for reconsideration of the situation by the 400 million people of China.